

Eton; in fact, much more is thought of it than work in most cases. The admiration of athletics among those in the lower part of the school amounts practically to worship; and much time is naturally demanded for satisfying this worship. So not only much work, but much play has to be accounted for in an Eton day.

Without going so far as to set it down as a rule that there is too much work to do, there is certainly quite enough to keep the average person very busy. It is, however, when the unfortunate Etonian has other duties to perform in addition to his ordinary work that his life becomes most arduous. As he reaches the top of the school, he will probably find some of these duties and responsibilities devolving upon him. Captain of the House and "Keeper" of a cricket game are both positions which involve certain extra work and worry, for which there is often not sufficient time left over while doing the ordinary school work. Again, if a boy enters for any prize or scholarship for which he has to do work by himself, he will find it nearly impossible to get this work done. Above all, a position like that of editing the "Chronicle" really makes too much work to be comfortably done; the whole week becomes one mad race against time—the most unrelenting of adversaries. On the other hand, those who reach the top of the school, and escape any such duties, often manage to have a comparatively slack time, with much opportunity for sitting on "the wall" on hot days, to the envy of their overworked companions.

Finally, it certainly appears very difficult to make any great change for the better in the present curriculum, which is without doubt a sound one. Some slight modifications, however, might be beneficial in meeting some of the difficulties already commented upon. It may be taken for granted that a grounding in classics, such as we receive here, is the best basis for education. So far so good; but why mingle this classical grounding with so much science, mathematics, and French that the attention is divided instead of being concentrated? If it is to be a classical grounding, let it be so, and not a general grounding. Secondly, let there be an early opportunity for specialising after the first grounding in classics; if the boy shows no aptitude in this direction, let him pursue that subject for which he is most fitted; his bent will soon show itself. It is a fatal mistake for a boy

with no real taste for classics to be pegged down to them for all his time at Eton, as is often the case now, when a boy has to reach Upper Fifth before he can specialise in any subject. The result of this rule is that the would-be specialists can never specialise, not being good at classics, and so reaching Upper Division either too late or else not at all. Broadly, let the work be less dissipated, and let the specialists be given a chance; also, let there be not quite so much work for many of us, especially on Fridays. But it is hard to pick holes in the present system; and, difficult as it is to suit everybody with the same curriculum, it is only fair to say that under the present *régime* in must be, in nine cases out of ten, the fault of the boy, and not of the teaching, if he fails to benefit by the Eton education. And let us conclude by assuring our friend the critic that he is mistaken in thinking that the Summer Half at Eton is organised on the lines of the old motto—"Æstate pueri, si valent, satis discunt."

J. G.

Comment and criticism on this article is invited.

THE RIGHT USE OF HYPNOTISM.

Hypnotism is no new science, but the revival of a very old art, and there is strong evidence that it was known to, and practised by, the ancients. Its re-introduction in modern times was due to Mesmer, a Viennese physician, 170 years ago, after whom it took the name by which it was then, and long after known, but the mysticism and exaggeration by which he and his followers surrounded it, caused it to fall into disrepute, and to be ignored by the bulk of the medical profession of his day. Its practice was again revived, however, by Drs. Easdaile, Elliottson, and Braid, about the middle of the last century, and by the latter was placed, for the first time, upon a scientific basis, and used with great success in the treatment of

disease; and in order to free it from the discredit which had fallen upon it under the name of Mesmerism, he gave it the name of *Hypnotism*, by which it is now known. Since his time the serious study of the subject is being taken up by medical men in most civilized countries, in some of which its practice is properly regulated by law. It has been found most useful in those large numbers of well-nigh hopeless cases of pain, spasm, or other nervous phenomena, where no organic cause can be found, and in which no other remedy seems of any avail. The science in this country still continues to be degraded by public exhibitions and by ignorant quacks and charlatans, and it is much to be desired that, as soon as possible, its use should be limited by legal enactment to medical men under proper restrictions, in the treatment of disease.

A. B. T.

DEAR EDITOR,

The first glance at the subjects for discussion in this number of the Magazine made one wonder why our much-respected Editor should choose a subject apparently so much outside its pages as the first one; but second thoughts have perhaps solved the problem. Is it the proverbial "red rag" held out by a despairing editor to whom no one will "come on" and enter the lists of authorship?

To clear the way (or to close it finally), is there a *right* use of hypnotism and suggestion—that is, I take it, as far as teachers are concerned? And, as a limitation, surely "suggestion" is the method used in the practice of hypnotism, so that the two cannot be discussed separately.

It would not be suitable, even were it possible, to enter here upon the medical use of "suggestion." It has been said to produce wonderful cures, but, even if these are allowed, an edged tool has been used, much in the same way as some poisons are found efficacious in fighting deadly disease. But we do not give poisons to healthy persons in no need of a physician.

"But," says someone, "what about 'change of thought'; is not this 'suggestion'?" No, it is *not* "suggestion" in the accepted meaning of the term. "Suggestion" implies the conscious exertion of personal influence, and, to members of

the P.N.E.U., this is forbidden ground. For those who have not the Synopsis by them, may I quote part of Clause 15:—"The use of 'suggestion'—even self-suggestion—as an aid to the will is to be deprecated as tending to stultify and stereotype character. It would seem that spontaneity is a condition of development, and that human nature needs the discipline of failure as well as of success."

We all remember how Christian and Hopeful "came at a place where they saw a way put itself into their way, and seemed withal to lie as straight as the way which they should go; and here they knew not which of the two to take, for both seemed straight before them; therefore, here they stood still to consider, . . . and a man, black of flesh but covered with a very light robe, came to them and asked them why they stood there. . . . 'Follow me,' said the man, 'it is thither I am going.' So they followed him in the way that but now came into the road, which by degrees turned, and turned them so from the city that they desired to go to that in little time their faces were turned away from it; yet they followed him. But by-and-by, before they were aware, he led them both within the compass of a net, in which they were both so entangled that they knew not what to do; and with that the white robe fell off the black man's back." It does not do to draw the parallel too closely, but we all have these moments of indecision, and it is only as we can recognise the *principle* involved that we can ourselves hope to escape the influence of fair words and to choose the right way.

In this connection I am allowed to quote from some short notes of Miss Mason's Sunday Meditation at the last Students' Conference. The subject was "My servant shall deal prudently," and the second section took up the subject of Prudence as regards influence. "The prudence in question is not worldly wisdom, but the prudence of the servant with his master's property (the attitude for all teachers who also 'occupy' till He comes in teaching and training the 'little ones'). This sort of prudence eliminates the *personal* element. You remember how our Lord refused the young man who said, 'I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest,' and our Lord in so setting an example of 'ye are not your own' in the choice of friends and dependents, teaches us that

we must also learn to exercise prudence with regard to those who would influence us and those who, we can easily see, are only too ready to be influenced by us.

We each have a business, a life, in which not even our nearest and dearest may interfere. We may not be great, but we have each a realm in which we may not allow anyone else to enter. When undue intimacy has been allowed, when we "cannot call our soul our own," or, worse still, have ourselves usurped undue authority in any other soul—then is that soul entangled in a net from which, if ever, it can only be freed by stern and searing measures. Those who have most truly loved one another are those who have most truly maintained their separate life towards God and man. Our Lord spent all night in prayer before choosing His friends; are we not apt to be casual, and to let come what may in the way of friends both for ourselves and for those for whom we are responsible?

We may not have *chance* opinions on this subject any more than we may have *chance* desires. It is the part of prudence to be taught, and he who will listen can say: "He openeth mine ear morning by morning." But we must *choose* to be taught that we may learn to choose between ideas."

So many new, specious, ideas run amok through the world to-day because *anything* that is new is apt to be welcome, and there is no effort to make the right choice; so we get, not the survival of the fittest, but the survival of all ideas, good, bad, and indifferent—all in flourishing condition—because although we pray "lead us not into temptation," we do not also heed the command, "see that ye enter not into temptation." To go back to the question of "change of thought *v.* suggestion"—for this seems to be the crux of the whole matter—I have several times lately been recommended to read books of a certain type of thought as being "so P.N.E.U. in thought"; and the one or two that have come in my way seem to confuse these two very matters. These books, which are just now very popular, recommend "suggestion and self-suggestion" in its various forms. They do not often declare themselves so openly as did one of this kind seen on a railway bookstall, *Assert Yourself* (consisting of passages from Emerson's writings), but the root principle remains the same; and unless we are aware of the tendency of these interesting and grati-

fyng ideas, we stand in great danger of being caught in the same net as Christian. The rule of life in all these books is that you must make yourself good. The germ of truth that is seized upon is the will-power which everyone possesses, but which is not made sufficient use of. Now we of the P.N.E.U. maintain that this will-power is the man, *but* that it is conditioned—to quote our Synopsis again: "The way to will effectively is to turn our thoughts from that we desire but do not will. The best way to turn our thoughts is to think of something or do some quite different thing entertaining or interesting; after a little rest in this way, the will returns to its work with new vigour."

"Change of thought" gives positive help to the will by relaxing the tension for a moment and thus allowing the will to act with renewed force! "Suggestion," on the other hand, boldly says: "Go on, your will can do its work because the obstacle is not there, or the obstacle is after all an aid, *if you would only think so.*" To give an example: we have all of us come across children who have been seriously injured by being brought up in an atmosphere of good and beautiful, moral and intellectual "suggestions." A child of four repeats the pretty, thoughtful things his nurse suggests to him, is taught to express love and admiration for the beautiful things he is shewn. I have seen a child told to kiss and pat the "poor table" he has just hit his head against (which is neither better nor worse than the older form "wicked table to hurt baby's head"!)

I was told not long ago of a splendid cure for a nervous child easily depressed by slight ailment:—"I make him walk up and down the nursery and say 'I have no headache, I am so glad I have no headache,' again and again." The wearisomeness of such a proceeding was enough to cure any ailment, but what of the effect on the mind and soul of a child brought up in such an artificial atmosphere?

This is "suggestion," and, alas! as the child grows up his initiative, which has always been forestalled, ceases to exist, he loses his power of concentration, and depends for every effort, mental and moral, upon further "suggestion." With grown-up people "suggestion" is carried still further, and a carefully thought out system is offered as the panacea for all ills—a system which overcomes the ills by denying their existence.

"Change of thought," on the other hand, takes the mind away from the sore point, does not say it is not there, does not discuss the subject at all.

Again, "Self-Suggestion" concentrates the thoughts of a person upon *himself*; "Change of thought" upon anything but *himself*.

We should try to see clearly the difference between "Change of thought" and "Suggestion," as upon our insight in this matter will depend the future of the children under our care. By "Change of thought" we may make them *persons*; by the use of "Suggestion" we may make them very good and amenable but *automata* and *not* persons, acting on the initiative of another and not on their own. The child who has knocked his head does not pity the table (to do so gives him a moral twist), but he is asked "If all his tin soldiers can stand?" He thinks of something else, and the pain is forgotten.

And for ourselves (or for older children) when we are a little discontented and a little depressed, or even a little offended, it is a mistake to try to suggest to ourselves the right, good and cheerful thoughts for the occasion; the better way is to think of some "outing" we have in view, of some friend in need of our help, of a poem we have not yet quite fathomed—that is to say, we change our thoughts, and by so doing we "enter not into temptation."

I am, yours truly,

X. Y. Z.



I AM, I CAN, I OUGHT,
I WILL.

I am a student full of fire,
And keen the youthful mind to fill,
To guide aright the young Desire,
It is my duty—and I will!

I can with never-failing tact
All furious tempers promptly still,
All evil habits counteract,
And so because I can—I will!

Dauntless and bold I start a school
With every subject freely taught,
Controlled by scientific rule,
Because I am, and can, and ought!

And when they ask the reason why
Against all odds I struggle still?
Nobly I make the proud reply,—
I am, I can, I ought, I will.